THE

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL

JOURNAL.

VOL. XXV. WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1841. No. 18.

A LECTURE,

Introductory to a Course on the Institutes of Medicine and Materia Medica, delivered before the Medical Class of the University of New York, on the Evening of October 28th, 1841. By MARTYN PAINE, M.D.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

GENTLEMEN,—It being a part of the duties of my chair to teach you the Philosophy of Medicine, I shall endeavor, at all times, to follow the *simple* path of Nature; and in so doing, we shall find nothing but an admirable system of design, intimately associated in all its parts, always consistent, reaching from the *rudimentary* development of the organic being to the ultimate extinction of its laws, whose multifarious phenomena perpetually spring from principles which are established in the *germ*. Whatever, therefore, may be the complexities of disease, you have the consolation of knowing that it is simple in its *essential* elements, that these elements are *forever* present, and that you will be mainly employed in investigating the *modifications* which they undergo. Here, then, you will always stand upon a great and immutable foundation of Nature. This will always be your guide, always your point of departure, and to this you will always return from your excursions into the paths, which radiate from it in conformity with the constitution of the great plan of organic life.

Nature, indeed, is *always* simple in her *fundamental* laws. She abhors a complexity of causes, as much as she is said to do a vacuum. The Institutes of Medicine, therefore, and the Philosophy of the operation of Remedial Agents, being directly the offspring of the properties and laws of organic beings, *they*, also, must, of necessity, be simple in *their* essential attributes. Hence, it is manifest, that my course of instruction will have mutual and intimate dependencies—forming a connected chain which cannot be interrupted without impairing the whole.

But, there are, also, *artificial* institutes of medicine—such as are not recognized by Nature; and which, therefore, consist of a broken series of hypotheses, either having no relation to each other, or standing in direct opposition. From this, it necessarily results that the treatment of disease, which is founded upon these hypotheses, is not less unphilosophical, not less contradictory of itself, and abundantly demonstrative of the primary error. This has been the misfortune of medicine at all ages of the art, but, at none more so than in our own times. With *these* I must also make you acquainted, though I shall limit my exposure of error to the doctrines of the present day. You will thus enjoy the opportunity of exercising your own judgments, and of making your election between good and evil—myself allowing that the evil may be mine.

In adopting this only method of arriving at the truth, my earnest desire to remove some formidable obstacles from your path will necessarily give an *appearance* of asperity where none is intended. It will unavoidably result from the nature of the contrasts which will be presented; and the importance of our pursuits to the interests of mankind, and to the dignity of mind, will permit no complimentary sacrifice to the ingenuity of speculations. Truth must be stern and inexorable, to overcome the obstinacy of error; for error, like the heads of the hydra, can never be propitiated. We may cut off its heads—but still the principle of regeneration may remain. We must then come to the *actual cautery*, as employed by Hercules in the case of the hydra, as our only infallible resource. But, in all that I may say, now, or hereafter, I wish it to be distinctly understood, that my remarks have no intended application to *men*, but are simply designed for the promotion of truth—of that truth which was so beautifully recommended to your admiration, the last evening, by its "Professor in Theory and Practice."

I shall begin my course of instruction by examining the composition of organic beings in both animated kingdoms—though not so much for the purpose of acquainting you with the abstract fact, as of presenting a series of coincidences at the very foundation of organic beings, which irresistibly demonstrate their dependence upon peculiar properties and laws, about which all physiology, all pathology, all therapeutics, are immediately concerned. A knowledge of these vital properties and the laws they obey, and which, as of all other existences, we acquire through their peculiar and endless phenomena, is fundamental in medicine. They preside over all healthy and morbid conditions. The functions, and all the products of the living being, are *primarily* referable to these properties. Unlike all other properties or powers of nature, they are susceptible of influences from external and internal causes, and are liable to great instability. This instability is at the foundation of disease, and of therapeutics—though the latter involves the important constitutional principle, then when these properties are diverted from their natural condition, they have an *inherent tendency* to return to their natural standard.

We have thus before us, in a *few* words, the simple elements of physiology, pathology, and therapeutics. They are all immediately concerned about one elementary principle, which is manifested under different phases. The *physiological* or *natural* condition is constituted when the vital properties possess their *normal* state; the *pathological*, when they are *altered* from their natural condition; whilst *therapeutics modifies* their morbid changes, and places them in a condition to obey their constitutional tendency to return to a state of health. *This* they are often able to accomplish without the intervention of art, which *never* cures, but only places *nature* in the *way* of cure. This is all that can be understood of the celebrated *vis medicatrix naturæ*, a most important law appertaining to the constitution of the vital properties, but about which much illusion, and many extravagancies have prevailed.

Such, then, is fundamental in medicine. But, however elegant this simplicity in the most essential attributes of organic beings, such are the natural modifications of the properties of life in the different organs and tissues, and such their liability to change from a thousand influences, and according to the nature of those influences, and although nothing happen but under the direction of some everlasting law which operates according to the existing combination of causes, medicine is, nevertheless, the most profound, the most complex, the most difficult of all human pursuits. It was once thought to have been only worthy of the gods—and temples were consecrated to their disciples.

But, the vital properties must have their *instruments* of *action*, through which the *functions* are performed, the being obtains his growth and nutrition, his secretions elaborated from the universal alimentary fluid, and the morbid phenomena carried on. These instruments of action consist of the visible organization; and in every part of this are the vital properties implanted.

It is obvious, therefore, that we can have no adequate knowledge of the functions of life, whether healthy or morbid, without a critical familiarity with the organization through which they are conducted; and this will become more and more apparent as we advance in our inquiries. Nor is it alone a *general* outline of the human mechanism which will enable us to comprehend the arcana of disease, or to apply its appropriate remedies. The vital properties are *differently modified* in every organ, and in the different tissues of each organ, and often in the same parts of a continuous tissue, and they are not only constantly liable to different influences from remote causes, but according, also, to their natural modifications in different parts. They must, therefore, be liable to great differences in their *results*; whether physiologically, pathologically, or therapeutically considered. We must also be familiar with the sources from which the various organic viscera derive their nerves and bloodvessels, and how communications are established amongst the organs by these and other anatomical connections.

The most important of these media of communication is the cerebro-spinal and ganglionic system, especially the sympathetic branch of it. The distribution of the sympathetic nerve should be well comprehended, as should also those cerebral nerves which are contributed to important vital organs, or others which associate themselves with the sympathetic, and thus establish intimate relations between the organs of animal and organic life. By these various nervous connections, the harmony of the entire machine is maintained, or the equilibrium of the whole disturbed when morbific causes may derange the action of one part or another. It is also through these connections, particularly, that remedial agents, whether applied to the stomach or to the skin, exert their salutary impressions upon diseased organs which may be remotely situated. The communicating nerves, however, are often complex, and their analysis is not always of easy attainment. But, a knowledge of the nerves, with which the natural and morbid functions are so intimately associated, is less important than that of the general tissues which compose each vital organ. The peculiar properties of the nervous system, which are known as sensibility and sympathy, have no other participation in organic processes than as they *influence* those processes. The nervous power is to be regarded in the light of a vital stimulus, and regulator of the organic functions—sensitive to an inconceivable degree, and whilst itself a vital stimulus, is capable of *being acted upon and modified in its nature*; but operating in health without any remarkable demonstrations. But, its *constitutional* nature is such for the maintenance of uniform and harmonious movements throughout the animal fabric, that when *influenced* by *unusual* causes, it may undergo a violent development, become *modified* in its nature, and may determine *healthy* or *morbid* changes in the *organic* properties, or *extinguish* them in the *twinkling* of an eye.

I was not a little gratified at the manner in which our Professor of Surgery adverted to the prodigious results which are destined to flow from the discoveries of Sir Charles Bell; and I will go perhaps even farther than he, and anticipate the time when those discoveries will be to medicine what the calculus is to mathematics. Encouraged by the brief, but comprehensive and philosophical reference which was made on Monday evening to the principles which are involved in this great triumph of physiology, I will also venture to predict, that the doctrine which I have just *propounded* for the first time in relation to the modification of the nervous power, will open to us the whole philosophy of remote sympathy in connection with pathology and therapeutics. It opens to us the whole philosophy of the operation of morbific and remedial agents upon organs that are remotely situated from the direct seat of their application. This supposed modification of the nervous power is in perfect harmony with the instability of the organic properties themselves, and is not only sustained by the whole force of this analogy, but by *all* the phenomena that relate to the principle of remote sympathy. That you may, however, the better comprehend what I regard as modifications of the nervous power, according to the nature of the agents or causes by which it is developed, whether natural, morbific, or remedial, you have only to consider, farther, how *electricity* is modified by the *galvanic* apparatus, and how again by the organization of the *torpedo*; how each affects in peculiar modes the properties of life, or how each determines peculiar influences upon inorganic substances; or how, again, perhaps, the magnificent conception may have been demonstrated by our Professor of Chemistry, that the colorific, the calorific, and the deoxydizing rays of light are only modified states of a common substance. Think, also, of the wonderfully different attributes of each of these rays, and you will then have no difficulty, with the aid of the multifarious phenomena of sympathy, and the cerebro-spinal and ganglionic system, in comprehending how this poison or that, or this remedy or another, or joy or grief, shall so *develope* and *modify* the nervous power, that it shall be directed upon, and alter the organic properties of parts that are distant from the direct seat of the morbific or remedial action, in one case in one way, in another case in another way. I know of no exception to the theory, and without it you cannot explain the remote influences of remedial agents; whilst this construction of their *modus operandi* is in perfect harmony with the natural phenomena of sympathy.

But, what may be the *nature* of the nervous power, or of the organic powers, no one can divine, any more than he can imagine the *nature* of the most tangible and ponderable substance. But this does not prevent us from *knowing* the *existence* of the substances, and their *laws*, and that each is *radically different* from the others.

The practitioner, however, may come to acquire, by a diligent observation of nature, an adequate apprehension of the vital influences which one part exerts upon others, without knowing, in detail, the special media of communication. But, his knowledge of these influences is vastly facilitated by anatomical acquirements, pursued with a reference to this fundamental point; and without this anatomical aid, conviction is slow, and success can only be obtained by a long and careful study of the phenena of life, under their varied aspects of health and disease. This labor, too, with the best anatomical proficiency, must be always great before the laws of sympathy can be justly realized in their variously modified relations, or in their practical bearings.

Rare genius may analyze the phenomena of disease, often reduce them to generalizations, and apply the *appropiate* remedies, without, perhaps, understanding the details of structure. We have examples of this nature among the fathers of medicine, of whom none is so remarkable as he who created the science, and expounded that system of rational philosophy, which, at a distant age, was consecrated by Bacon, and has since given to arts and sciences an impulse which is carrying them fast to the limit of any rapid improvements. But, though it be easy to *admire* the genius which *creates* a science, we may not *imitate* it. Most of us must be contented to study *its elements,* and to advance, step by step, before we can grasp the principles *already* known, and reduce them to practice. Such, at least, has been my own laborious experience; slowly gathered in the field of nature—or by consultation with others—or by unwearied meditation. We must come, therefore, to the work of preparation, not only with resolute purpose, but with a *zeal* that shall maintain that purpose.

Although anatomy is at the foundation of practical medicine, it is only that of the great vital organs with which the *physician* is particularly interested; and yet these are the ones which are most apt to be neglected. Such as relate to that division which is called animal life, the muscles, for instance, is to him comparatively unimportant. It is here that the surgeon holds his empire, and to him this branch of anatomy is not less indispensable than the former is to the physician. The mere operative surgeon may practise his art without knowing whether the stomach be composed of one or more tissues—whether it be seated in the abdomen or in the thorax. And with all this ignorance, he may acquire a far greater temporary renown by a stroke of the knife, than the most consummate philosopher in medicine. But he, who would embrace in the range of his usefulness the more exalted art of *treating* surgical diseases, and who prefers the conservative efforts of nature to the more summary process, must be skilled in the whole department of anatomy, and in the divination and cure of *internal* disease. *So,* will you be told by *one* whom the world *delights* to *honor.*

Considering, therefore, gentlemen, the importance of anatomy to your practical pursuits, I trust you will spare no effort in making an attainment which will exalt you above the ordinary grade of practitioners, and which will bring you a daily recompense in the conviction that your knowledge of disease reposes on one of the great foundations of nature—that your remedies are directed to an intelligible purpose, and, whether the issue be favorable or fatal, that you may equally rejoice in the consciousness that you have been guided by an enlightened understanding of the art, or that your efforts have not been frustrated by the imbecilities or the rashness of ignorance.

We are now conducted to the immediate objects of inquiry in my lectures; the first of which is physiology in its relations to the natural condition of organs. This is the beginning of a *vast* superstructure, which has been the progressive work of many ages, and which, more than any other pursuit, has enjoyed the laborious efforts of genius, and the unwearied toil of a great, though humbler class of mankind.

From physiology, we ascend to its application to pathology, and therapeutics; which, in their connected series, make up the vast fabric that reposes upon the *structure* of organs.

Physiology, according to its Greek derivation and original import, embraces the whole field of nature. The moderns, however, have restricted the word to the science of life. In this acceptation, it comprehends all that relates immediately to the powers and functions of organic beings. It takes in, therefore, the whole vegetable, as well as the animal kingdom. Each of these kingdoms possesses in common the most important conditions of life, though existing in each under specific modifications or varieties; not, however, very dissimilar, and intimately connected by a gradation of analogies, as we descend along the chain of either till we come at their connecting link in the lowest being of one or the other—as the sponge, for instance, which has enjoyed the distinguished honor of having been successively assigned to the three kingdoms of nature, and of being now exalted to the dignity of an animal. Other conditions are superadded to the nobler kingdom, which, with the differences of structure, and the modifications of their common properties of life, and their modes of subsistence, distinguish the two living kingdoms from each other. I shall enter largely into the consideration of these topics, as all rational medicine is intimately concerned with their knowledge. The importance which I have attributed to anatomy is predicated of these ulterior objects. It would be in vain that you comprehend the *structure* of organs, without knowing the nature of the powers and functions which they subserve, and the laws which they obey; since all diseases consist essentially in certain alterations of the properties of life, which lead to all the modifications of the laws and functions, and to every sensible result of a morbid nature. A knowledge of the whole is obtained through the phenomena as they are presented to our senses, and by nothing else. From these, we reason to the invisible existence, its changes, &c., with as much certainty as to those which possess the most tangible characteristics. It is just so in respect to the mind, and the brain with which it is associated, whether in their natural or morbid aspects.

[To be continued.]

UTERINE POLYPI.—NEW INSTRUMENT FOR THEIR EXCISION.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

Mrs. A—— was visited, at the request of Dr. Cyrus Weeks, of this city. She was the mother of several children, and had been for a year or more the subject of constant hemorrhagic discharges from the uterus, accompained with expulsive pains An oval body, of pyriform shape, projecting slightly through the os tincæ, had been mistaken by the two attendants who preceded Dr. Weeks, for prolapsus uteri. A pessary being applied, no relief followed, and Dr. W. was consulted. He detected polypus; only the most depending portion could be reached, whilst the patient was standing, the neck being evidently attached at or near the fundus. The ligature was passed by me with great facility by the accompanying instrument. The polypus came away on the second day, the ligature having fairly encircled the neck. The patient is now quite well—nearly three years after the operation. The mass was about the size of an egg, and of the fibrous kind.

Dr. Isaac Wood, of this city, very kindly consented to apply the instrument to a case under his care. The patient was about 35 years old, and a mother. Drs. John W. Francis, R. K. Hoffman, Benjamin Drake and myself, were present. The polypus was attached within the uterus, the neck being beyond the reach of the finger. Scarcely sufficient time for ordinary examination, certainly not over two minutes, had elapsed from its introduction by Dr. Wood, when it was successfully applied. This also came away on the second day, and was of the fibrous character, about the size of an egg. The ligature encircled the neck completely, and is still attached to the tumor, in my possession.

Dr. J. P. Stryker, of Newtown, L. Island, requested me to visit a patient who had irregular menstruation, accompanied with great hemorrhage and expulsive pains. The polypus was so far within the womb that it could only be reached by using much exertion, the patient standing; it could barely be touched with the forefinger. Drs. Wright, of Newtown, and Stryker, were present and examined the patient. The ligature was passed with great facility. The tumor came away on the third day, the neck being fairly encircled. The patient recovered. This was of the cellulo-vascular character, about the size of a black walnut, and of a deep red color. It is now in my possession.

I have likewise had occasion to excise small fibrous polypi in three instances, attached to the neck of the uterus, and in one case to the posterior wall of the vagina. In these cases more or less hemorrhage existed. My object in mentioning them is to show the necessity of investigation—for polypi are certainly more frequent than they are supposed to be. Dr. Dewees, as late as 1831, had seen, as he supposed, but one case. (See his work on Diseases of Females.) Now in his vast practice, more than this, it is almost certain, must have occurred. The only way to account for the smallness of the number, is to suppose some of his cases of menorrhagia to have been caused by polypi. Indeed, in their incipient state, being entirely intra-uterine in many cases, and menorrhagia a constant attendant, it is more than probable that this is the correct explanation. Dr. Denman reports nine cases. This would seem to confirm the above supposition, as the practice of the two gentlemen could not have been numerically dissimilar.

Dr. Dewees remarks that a ligature "cannot be applied till the polypus descends into the vagina." Mr. Cooper (See his Dictionary) also denies its possibility. Dr. Denman, though he experienced great difficulty and lost several patients, succeeded in one or two instances. The instruments of Drs. Clark and Gooch are familiar to surgeons. I have only adopted my own, because, like all *one's own* devices, it is a favorite. Its self-opening power, its facility of entrance and application, and last, not least, its cheapness, recommend it in some degree to use. My preceptors, Drs. Valentine Mott and J. W. Francis, consider it a valuable improvement. The drawing will explain it sufficiently.

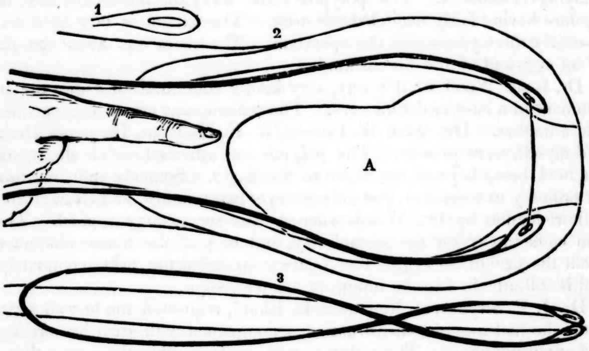

Fig. 1. Size of the probe-points, which are made of common solder, and should be flattened.

Fig. 2, shows a section of the uterus, with the polypus, A, so situated that the finger in the vagina can scarcely reach it, and the instrument applied.

Fig. 3, is the instrument *shut*, ready for application.

It is to be made of stout wire, *hard drawn,* about one twelfth of an inch in diameter; twelve inches long, and to retain the proportions of the cut. It should always be passed over the abdominal aspect of the tumor, as far as it will go without force, and suffered to spring open. The elevation of the handle will depress the points, bringing the ligature athwart the neck of the tumor; two or three turns will then strangulate it. Should the patient complain of *acute pain*, slack up and withdraw it a little, then turn again; if no pain follows, twist it again two or three times, and leave the instrument within. The patient must lie down till the tumor comes away. The complaint of pain is of great importance, as it proves part of the uterus to be included—which for the most part will prove fatal if suffered to remain included. An instructive case may be found in Denman, where the patient complained of pain, and a postmortem proved part of the uterus to be included. There can be no pain of an *acute* kind on passing the ligature over the polypus alone, as it has no nerves.

In selecting the ligature in preference to the knife, as the proper means of removing polypi, we shall certainly effect the object desired in a manner far the safest and most agreeable to the patient. Indeed, how a polypus attached to the fundus can be removed with the knife, without drawing the fundus on a level with the external parts, we believe surgeons have yet to learn. **Edward H. Dixon.**

New York, Nov. 25, 1841.

FRACTURES NEAR THE WRIST.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

Dear Sir,—As I happened to be present at one of Dr. Mott's Clinical Lectures to his class in the University of this city, on a late occasion, and as several inquiries have been made of me respecting the substance of those remarks which related to the difficulties of the surgical treatment of fractures near the wrist, I have supposed it might be of interest enough to the profession, as a matter of medical jurisprudence, to warrant an insertion of those remarks in your Journal. Under the hope that you would concur with me in this view, and that I might do exact justice to Dr. Mott, I called on him this day, and he had the goodness to repeat to me the substance of his clinical remarks, as follows: "That fractures of the radius within two inches of the wrist, when treated by the most eminent surgeons, are of very difficult management so as to avoid all deformity, and that more or less deformity may occur under the treatment of the most eminent surgeons; that more or less imperfection in the motion of the wrist or radius is very apt to follow for a longer or shorter time; that even where the fracture is well cured, an anterior prominence at the wrist, or near it, will sometimes result from swelling of the soft parts, &c."

As the above opinion of Professor Mott coincides with my own observations, both in Europe and in this city, as well as with many of our most distinguished surgical authorities, I venture to hope that this very brief communication may assist in removing some of the groundless and ill-merited aspersions that are occasionally thrown on the members of our profession by the ignorant or designing. Very respectfully yours,

New York, Oct. 1*st*, 1841. **W. J.**

CASES OF SCROFULA CURED BY THE XANTHOXYLUM FRAXINEUM.

Physicians, I believe, agree, that many of their most valuable remedies were discovered and first used by empirics; and hence the necessary conclusion that the use of a remedy by an empiric is only *prima facia* evidence against its efficiency. It is my wish to direct the attention of physicians to a remedy, which appears to have been used by quacks, with at least apparent success, in one of those diseases which appear to be mingled with the springs of life so perfectly, that palliation is attempted rather than relief. I refer to a shrub, the botanical name of which I do not know. I have heard it called prickly ash, prickly sumach,* and tear-blanket. It is very common here in the West, and I believe generally known by one of these names. The case in which this remedy was first used within my knowledge, was that of a negro woman of mine, some fifty years of age. She had been under the care of a physician for some months, without having derived the least benefit from the usual remedies. The ulcers about the throat had become very deep and large. She was very much emaciated. In short, the physician despaired of her wholly, and suggested the propriety of trying the prickly ash, saying that he had heard, when a boy, that it had been used successfully in that disease. He tried it, and in a short time all the urgent symptoms were relieved—the ulcers assumed a healthy appearance and healed up perfectly—the only application to them being a little tallow upon a rag. The disease appeared to have been perfectly eradicated in that case, there having been no symptom of its return during three years.

The next case that I saw was a man some 40 years of age—very spare habit. His family was scrofulous. His throat was much scarred when I saw him in 1840. He said that for some years previous to 1828, he had been much afflicted with scrofula, not only with the ulceration about the jaws, but with violent pain in the chest, inflammation about the eyes; the water from his eyes was so acrid that it excoriated his cheeks. After having, as he expressed it, "spent all his earnings upon the doctors without being benefited at all," he, in 1828, applied to a negro-doctor, who gave him the prickly ash; he was entirely cured, and remained free from scrofula until his death, last spring.

The next case that I saw was that of a young lady who had had the advice of the most eminent of our western physicians; indeed, she had been under the care of one of the most eminent, for some years, with scarce even a temporary relief. She had entirely despaired of recovery. I recommended the prickly ash; in a few weeks all the swelling about the fauces subsided, the gums and cheeks assumed a healthy hue; she was relieved from the violent headaches to which she had been subject for years. She left the country before her cure was completed, and I understand some of the symptoms have since returned.

I have been thus particular in describing the cases, in order that those who have better opportunities of forming a correct opinion, may decide as to whether there be any hope that this may prove a specific in this horrible disease.

I take a handful of the bark of the stem or root, and boil it in a *new* iron vessel. I let it stand until the iron has blackened the tea. I give it thrice daily—let the patient take as much as the stomach will bear without nausea. A little rhubarb may occasionally be necessary.

I hope that my experience may induce some of the profession to try the remedy. I would suggest the propriety of making an inspissated preparation of the tea after the iron has combined with it, for patients complain very much of the bitter nauseous taste of the tea.—*Western Journal of Med. and Surg.*

---

* These are not the same plant. The Xanthoxylum Fraxineum is no doubt the one referred to. The Aralia Spinosa (prickly sumach), we incline to think, possesses no medicinal properties.—*Ed. Western Journal.*

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 8, 1841.

DR. GIBSON'S INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

An introductory discourse was pronounced by Dr. Gibson, of the Surgical Chair in the University of Pennsylvania, at the opening of the lecture term, Nov. 1st, which is quite out of the common order on such occasions, and well calculated to be extensively read by those who like to know the way to eminence. A large part of the lecture, and by far the most intensely interesting to the general reader, relates entirely to the professorial autobiography of the distinguished surgeon by whom it was delivered. Dr. Gibson gives a continuous narrative of events from the day he heard his first medical lecture, till he took possession of the professional chair he now so honorably sustains. He had a presentiment that he should be the successor of Dr. Physick, and he has lived to realize his high expectations. That he is a miracle of industry, is placed beyond all manner of doubt. Such constant and indefatigable perseverance as seems to have characterized Dr. Gibson's whole life, deserves to be rewarded with the praise of men. After saying this, we shall extract an occasional passage, leaving it to the medical world to say just what it may please of the style of his performance. That it is wholly and entirely unlike any other extant, it will not be denied. If Dr. Gibson were not in a commanding position, which he is abundantly strong enough to sustain with might and dignity, the medical press would assuredly fall upon him pell-mell, and that without mercy.

"Fifty years ago I had the honor of being born in the city of Baltimore and State of Maryland, and am, therefore, like many of yourselves, a native American and a southern man. After receiving the best intellectual education Annapolis and Princeton afforded, I commenced the study of medicine, and attended, in 1806, a course of lectures in this University. Three hours after my arrival in town I heard the first public lecture I ever listened to. It was from my distinguished predecessor—the late Dr. Physick. Struck with the peculiar appearance of that extraordinary man, and with the precepts he poured forth, my attention was riveted to every action he displayed and to every word that fell from his lips. I retired to my lodgings, kept by a very respectable widow lady, and mused for hours over the wonders I had seen and heard. Whilst rapt in the deepest study and completely abstracted, I was roused from my reverie by the touch of my kind landlady, at whose fireside I was sitting, and asked what I was thinking so seriously about? Almost unconsciously I replied, I am thinking of Dr. Physick and his lecture, and intend, some day or other, to occupy his place. Soon afterwards the boarders were assembled around the social meal, and after tea had been furnished to each, my kind hostess, having nothing else to do, said in tones that touched me to the quick, "What do you think, Gentlemen, this young man says? he says he intends to have Dr. Physick's place." In vain I put forth my hands, imploringly, to stop her tongue; with relentless and mischievous pleasure she reiterated the charge; and I had the mortification of receiving every species of home-thrust that sarcastic ingenuity could invent. For weeks afterwards the roars and shouts of the table rung in my ears; and many a sly glance and curl of the lip afterwards told what the thoughts of my associates were. Vexed, however, and annoyed as I was at thus being made a target to be shot at, the idea, which so unceremoniously took possession of my soul, was never for a moment lost sight of, but haunted my dreams by night and my thoughts by day. After close of the lectures I sailed for Europe and first repaired to Edinburgh, where I spent the summer in witnessing the private practice and operations of the celebrated John Bell, then in the zenith of his glory; in attending botanical and natural history lectures; in devoting particular attention to hospital practice; and in replenishing my stores of classical knowledge under Adam and Dalzell and other eminent linguists of the day. * *

"Three years and upwards I remained in Europe, devoting myself assiduously to medical and surgical pursuits, collecting all the scarce and valuable books, ancient and modern, I could lay my hands upon, hunting up instruments and apparatus of every description, of the most costly materials, for private use and for class demonstrations, and, in fact, spending a little fortune in such articles. Having accomplished all I wished, I returned home and settled in my native town. * * * *

"During the whole of my sojourn in my native city I constantly said to my friends I am a great believer in destiny, and feel confident that my residence here will be temporary merely; told them of the idea which had taken forcible possession of my mind whilst a student, and which never for a day had been absent from my thoughts; said I should be appointed to Dr. Physick's chair, and could almost venture to tell the hour at which the appointment would be made. That hour, true to my prediction, at last arrived. The lamented Dorsey had been chosen, in place of the late Dr. Wistar, professor of Anatomy, but survived only long enough to deliver an introductory lecture. The anatomical course, as well as the surgical, was carried on by Dr. Physick. At the termination of the course, it became a question whether Dr. Physick should abandon the surgical chair, originally instituted for him, and which he had occupied fifteen years, and become a candidate for the anatomical one, or a new anatomical professor be appointed in place of Dr. Dorsey. By advice of most of his colleagues and friends, and in accordance with his own wishes, Dr. Physick resigned his surgical chair, and, without opposition of consequence, was appointed to the anatomical. * * * *

"My appointment to Dr. Physick's chair took place in September, 1819—rather more than twenty-one years ago. I had immense opposition to contend with—the place being sought by some of the most eminent surgeons of the town, and of the United States; indeed, a petition was signed by almost all, I believe, of the medical men of Philadelphia, unconnected with the University, and presented to the Trustees, remonstrating against the appointment of any one not belonging to the city—certainly upon very untenable grounds, inasmuch as the school had, from time immemorial, been supplied with students not chiefly from Philadelphia, but from every district in the Union, and principally from the South."

"My first step, after receiving the appointment, was to inquire for and seek out my old landlady—wondering if she would recollect me and my predictions. Much to my sorrow, however, I found she had departed this life some years before. But fortunately I was enabled to trace her daughter and present myself to her notice. Finding she did not recollect me, I exclaimed, "Is it possible, Miss Betsey, you don't remember the young Virginia doctor—for by that sobriquet all students at that period were known—who impudently told your mother he meant to have Dr. Physick's place." I thought she would have eaten me up with kindness, for she took hold of me, danced about the room like a girl of fifteen, looked into my face again and again to see if she could trace any former resemblance, asked innumerable questions about where I had been, what I had been doing, and having satisfied her curiosity and gotten over her astonishment, began to calculate how long it had been since I had propheceid to her mother, and made it out just thirteen years. * *

"And now, Gentlemen, you will perceive, from the short history I have presumed to furnish, that I have been for thirty years engaged in lecturing upon the principles and practice of surgery, first in the University of Maryland, and next in the University of Pennsylvania as the successor of the late Dr. Physick, to whose hands and my own has the chair, so far, been only entrusted; that for the same number of years I have had charge of one or more hospitals, where I have constantly delivered clinical lectures and performed the most intricate and difficult operations; that I have devoted myself, assiduously, to the formation of a surgical cabinet, the most extensive, undoubtedly, in the United States, and not inferior to some of the best in Europe; that I have had for the best part of my life an extensive private practice, and have enjoyed from European education and the advantages obtained there theoretically and practically, and from collecting all forms of instruments and apparatus calculated to illustrate lectures, opportunities which few, if any, Americans can boast of.

"Let me assure you most solemnly, that I do not make these statements for display, or to enhance my own importance in your estimation. So far from it, I would willingly have shrunk from the task of even doing myself justice. But the times are portentous of evil, and quackery, in one shape or another, is overrunning the land, so that the strangest fabrications are afloat calculated to dazzle or blind the most intelligent minds; assertions bearing all the stamp of certainty upon their front are boldly and unhesitatingly made, which if not as peremptorily denied are likely to be received as truths, by those who would be unwilling themselves to

'Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the pyramid of calumny.'

"My object, then, from beginning to end of this discourse, has been to speak for myself, well knowing that now-a-days, every man must do that, or not be spoken for at all, and like John Randolph's butter, must be old enough and strong enough to take his own part. 'Johnny,' said a pedagogue, 'you have always been the best boy in my school, and never told me a lie in your life; come, then, my little man, speak out, and let me know who threw that pound of butter against the wall, for not one of those big fellows will say a word.' 'You had better,' said Johnny, 'ask the butter, it is old enough to speak for itself.' Now you will meet with many, no doubt, disposed to represent me as old, 'stale, flat and unprofitable' as that butter. Be this as it may, however, one thing is certain—that I never intend, if speaking for myself can prevent it, 'to go to the wall.'"

Deformities of the Wrist, from Fractures.—A New-York correspondent has conferred a favor in furnishing the Journal with Dr. Mott's clinical observations in regard to that unsymmetrical appearance of the wrist which is often noticeable after the re-union of the radius, and sometimes of the ulna, when fractured near their lower extremities. Every surgeon of extensive practice, it is presumed, has long since arrived at the conclusion that they are difficult bones to re-shape under such circumstances. Although we do not now recollect what Dr. Warren or Dr. Hayward may have said on this subject, in their lectures, it is quite certain that they are familiar with the anxieties of a surgical attendant, and have doubtless often warned their pupils of this condition of the bones of the wrist, as of all other untoward things that may occur in the management of broken bones. Dr. Howe, of Jaffrey, the able president of the Medical Society of New Hampshire, has, with characteristic ingenuity, invented an apparatus expressly for fractures of the bones entering into the composition of this joint, which was exhibited at the late Fair in this city. His remarks, in the course of an explanation upon the advantages to be derived from this instrument, not only left an impression that he considered a deformity very likely to follow a fracture at that place, but that he felt a strong desire to ascertain whether such a result could not be obviated by some mechanical device, which was yet a desideratum in surgical practice.

Bloomingdale Orthopedic Institution.—Within a short time these domestic hospitals, with a new name, the meaning of which seems to be imperfectly understood where it is most desirable to be informed, have sprung up in the principal Atlantic cities, and flourish with surprising vigor. Their success is solely owing to the generally supposed fact, that they are conferring a great benefit on the community. The gentlemen who conduct them, become expert in operations, from the frequency with which they are performed; and providing themselves with a multitude of apparatus, of the most ingenious construction, are able to meet all sorts of deformities. Although the general hospitals throughout the country are amply provided with all the conveniences that it is possible for any individual to collect, there are patients who will always prefer private accommodations, and the services of a surgeon of their own choice, to any great institution, however high its reputation. Again, people have their likes and dislikes to men, without regard to their professional skill or attainments; and this, and often this alone, is the secret of one man's success over another of equal experience and learning, residing in the same street. The Bloomingdale Orthopedic Institution is the creation of Dr. Mott, the reading of whose circular led to these reflections. That Dr. M. is an accomplished surgeon, no one thinks of questioning. Let him be where he will, business will follow—and we have no doubt, therefore, the institution under his charge will be eminently successful.

New Works in London.—Pereira's Materia Medica, the new edition, thoroughly revised, will be ready on January the 1st.—Liston's Elements of Surgery, greatly enlarged, with nearly one hundred wood engravings, and three copper-plates, the second edition.—Practical and Surgical Anatomy. By W. J. Erasmus Wilson, Lecturer on Practical and Surgical Anatomy and Physiology.—The Principles of Midwifery, including the Diseases of Women and Children. By John Burns, M.D., F.R.S., Regius Professor of Surgery in the University of Glasgow, &c. &c.—Human Physiology. By J. Elliotson, M.D., F.R.S.—New edition of Dr. Holland's Medical Notes, in one vol., 8vo.

Married,—At New York, W. Sutton, M.D., to Miss H. A. Lock.—At Philadelphia, Dr. Joseph Hopkinson, U. S. N., to Miss J. L. McCrea.—At Raleigh, N. C., Johnston Jones, M.D., to Miss M. A. Stewart.

Died,—At Pinckneyville, Miss., Dr. Webb, by shooting himself through the head.—At Newburn, N. C., George Saunders, M.D., 30—At New Orleans, Dr. Samuel W. Ruff, U. S. N.—On board the sloop of war Ontario, at sea, Oct. 23d, Edward McKinley, M.D., Assistant Surgeon U. S. N., of Philadelphia.—In Hart Co., Ky., Dr. William P. Savage, in his 26th year.

Number of deaths in Boston for the week ending Dec 4, 34.—Males, 20; Females, 14. Stillborn, 2. Of consumption, 9—child-bed, 1—scarlet fever, 7—infantile, 3—lung fever, 3—dropsy, 1—burn, 1—disease of the spine, 1—diarrhœa, 1—teething, 1—old age, 1—scrofula, 1—measles, 1—croup, 2.

REGISTER OF THE WEATHER,

Kept at the State Lunatic Hospital, Worcester, Ms. Lat. 42° 15 49". Elevation 483 ft.

1841. Nov.	THERM.			BAROMETER.			Wind, 2, P.M.	Weather, 2, P.M.	Remarks.
	Sun r.	2, P.M.	Sun s.	Sun r.	2, P.M.	Sun s.			
1 Mon.	55	67	64	29.75	29.66	29.60	S W	Fair	Indian summer. Continues mild and pleasant weather.
2 Tues.	58	59	59	29.40	29.27	29.26	S W	Rain	
3 Wed.	44	62	62	29.30	29.18	29.17	S W	Fair	
4 Thur.	37	47	46	29.10	29.11	29.10	N W	Fair	
5 Frid.	42	42	43	28.90	29.08	29.06	S W	Cloudy	.32 inch of rain.
6 Satur.	37	42	42	29.15	29.25	29.32	N W	Fair	
7 Sun.	36	40	40	29.52	29.55	29.55	N W	Fair	
8 Mon.	32	36	38	29.55	29.34	29.31	S E	Rain	Snow storm commenced 8 A. M., and continued with rain through the day. .42 inch of rain and 4 inches of snow.
9 Tues.	36	43	39	29.70	29.80	29.83	N E	Fair	
10 Wed.	31	48	34	29.94	29.93	29.91	N	Fair	
11 Thur.	22	49	42	29.80	29.60	29.60	N W	Fair	
12 Frid.	32	37	37	29.26	28.98	28.90	N E	Rain	.43 inch of rain.
13 Satur.	35	44	41	28.78	28.82	28.88	N W	Cloudy	Snow squall at 3 P. M.
14 Sun.	34	46	46	29.03	28.96	28.93	S W	Fair	Rain in the night. .17 inch fell.
15 Mon.	36	42	40	28.82	2 .77	28.76	N W	Cloudy	High wind.
16 Tues.	26	32	30	28.92	28.86	28.90	W	Fair	
17 Wed.	31	32	36	29.03	29.05	29.05	W	Snow	
18 Thur.	24	36	34	29.14	29.20	29.22	N W	Fair	Aurora borealis, continuing very brilliant through the night.
19 Frid.	26	36	33	29.40	29.43	29.47	N E	Cloudy	
20 Satur.	34	36	35	29.30	29.30	29.33	N E	Rain	.98 inch of rain in the night.
21 Sun.	35	3	44	29.50	29.52	29.54	N W	Fair	
22 Mon.	36	41	42	29.48	29.29	29.19	E	Rain	.88 inch of rain.
23 Tues.	47	48	44	29.10	29.20	29.24	N W	Fair	
24 Wed.	30	39	40	29.35	29.39	29.43	S W	Fair	
25 Thur.	34	40	38	29.57	29.50	29.41	N W	Fair	Rain and snow in the night.
26 Frid.	32	34	34	29.10	29.03	29.03	N E	Rain	.40 inch of rain.
27 Satur.	23	26	24	29.27	29.36	29.42	N W	Fair	
28 Sun.	24	26	28	29.72	29.76	29.78	N W	Cloudy	Snow in the night—high wind.
29 Mon.	20	22	22	29.50	29.35	29.32	N E	Snow	.22 inch of rain.
30 Tues.	18	28	26	29.55	29.62	29 63	N W	Fair	6 inches of snow fell.

The weather during the month has generally been fair and warm for the season. The thermometer has ranged from 18 to 64; barometer, from 28.76 to 29.94. Fall of snow, 10 inches; rain, 4.17 inches.

MEDICAL SCHOOL OF MAINE.

The Medical Lectures at Bowdoin College will commence on Monday, the 14th day of February, 1842, and continue three months.

Anatomy and Surgery, by - - - - - - -	Joseph Roby, M.D.
Theory and Practice of Physic, by - - - - -	William Sweetser, M.D.
Obstetrics, by - - - - - - - - - -	Ebenezer Wells, M.D.
Chemistry and Materia Medica, by - - - - - -	Parker Cleaveland, M.D.

The Library contains about 3000 vols. principally modern works.

Every person becoming a member of this Institution, is required previously to present satisfactory evidence of possessing a good moral character.

The amount of fees for the Lectures is $50, payable in advance. Graduation fee, $10.

Degrees are conferred at the close of the Lecture Term in May, and at the following Commencement of the College in September. PARKER CLEAVELAND, *Secretary.*

Brunswick, October, 1841. D. 8—eop6t

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

The subscriber, Physician and Surgeon to the Marine Hospital, Chelsea, will receive pupils and give personal instruction in the various branches of medical science. He will devote to them such time, and afford them such opportunities and facilities for study and practice, as are essential for a thorough and practical medical education. The medical and surgical practice of the Hospital will be constantly open to his students, and clinical instruction, on the cases as they occur, will be given. Abundant facilities for obtaining a correct knowledge of materia medica and the dispensing of medicines will be afforded.—For terms, and more particular information, application can be made at the Hospital or by letter. GEORGE W. OTIS, JR.

Chelsea, September, 1841. Sep.8—eoptf.

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

The undersigned have united for the purpose of receiving students in medicine and affording them a complete professional education. The following are some of the advantages which are offered.

Students will be admitted to the medical and surgical practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital, and to the Infirmary for Diseases of the Lungs. At the Hospital, Dr. Bowditch will deliver a course of clinical lectures; and there, but more particularly at the Infirmary, the students will be practised in the physical examination of pulmonary diseases.

Occasional opportunities will be had for private practice in midwifery, surgery, &c., in one of the largest dispensaries of the city.

Arrangements have been made for an abundant supply of means for the study of practical anatomy, and students may feel assured nothing will be wanting in this department.

A meeting of the students for the purpose of reporting cases, and for medical discussion and criticism, will be held weekly, under the superintendence of one of the instructers.

Gentlemen, previous to presenting themselves for their degrees, will be specially and minutely examined in the different branches with a view to their creditable appearance.

A regular course of instruction will be given as follows.

On Diseases of the Chest, and Midwifery, by	Dr. Bowditch.
Materia Medica and Chemistry, by	Dr. Wiley.
Theory and Practice of Medicine, by	Dr. Shattuck.
Descriptive and Practical Anatomy and Surgery, by	Dr. Parkman.

Rooms for study, fuel, and light, free of expense.

For terms, apply to S. Parkman, M.D., 196 Tremont street.

H. I. BOWDITCH, G. C. SHATTUCK, JR.
O. 13—eoptf H. G. WILEY, S. PARKMAN.

TO PHYSICIANS.

A **physician** in one of the most pleasant villages in the State, about 30 miles from Boston, wishes to dispose of and leave his situation. Practice from $1500 to $2000 yearly. For particulars, address the editor. Nov. 24—3t

---

REMOVAL.

A. F. **Bartlett** has removed to No. 3 Winter, corner of Washington st., where Dr. Chapin's Utero-Abdominal Supporters may be obtained as improved by Mr. B. D. 1.—3t

---

ABDOMINAL SUPPORTERS.

Dr. Haynes's instrument, which is recommended by the profession generally, may now be had at the Medical Journal office. Price, with perineal strap, only $4—without, $3,50. By addressing the publisher, No. 184 Washington street, physicians may be readily accommodated. A. 19

The Supporters may also be obtained of the following agents:—In New Hampshire, Drs. J. A. Dana, N. Hampton; A. Harris, Colebrook; M. Parker, Acworth; J. Crosby, Meredith; E. Bartlett, Haverhill; D. Crosby, Hanover; F. P. Fitch, Amherst; J. Smith, Dover; J. C. Eastman, Hamstead; C. B. Hamilton, Lyme; Stickney & Dexter, Lancaster; J. B. Abbott, Boscawen; N. Kendall & Co., Nashua. In Vermont, Dr. L. Jewett, St. Johnsbury. L. S. Bartlett, Lowell, Mass. J. Balch, Jr., Providence, R. I.

INSTRUMENTS.

Theodore Metcalf, Apothecary, No. 33 Tremont Row, offers to surgeons and dentists, the best selected assortment of Instruments to be found in the city: consisting in part of Amputating, Trepanning, Obstetrical, Dissecting, Strabismus, Pocket, Eye and Cooper's Cases; Scarificators, Catheters, Bougies, Stomach Pumps, Injecting do., Spring and Thumb Lancets, Dissecting and Dressing Scissors, Trocars, Needles, Bistouries; Dressing, Dissecting, Polypus and Throat Forceps, Tonsil Instruments, &c. &c. of American and English manufacture.

Extracting Forceps, in sets of 12, or singly, of superior form and finish; Excavators, Burrs, Pluggers, Drills, Files; Cutting, Splitting and Punching Forceps; Gold and Platina Plate and Wire, Solder and Springs, Gold and Tin Foil, **Mineral Teeth**, in great variety (much the largest assortment to be found in N. England), Grindstones, and almost every article used in the surgical or mechanical departments of Dentistry.

All orders from the country carefully and promptly executed. D. 1.—6m

---

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL is published every Wednesday, by D. CLAPP, JR., at 184 Washington St., corner of Franklin St., to whom all communications must be addressed, post paid. It is also published in Monthly Parts, with a printed cover. There are two volumes each year. J. V. C. SMITH, M.D., Editor. Price $3,00 a year in advance, $3,50 after three months, or $4,00 if not paid within the year. Two copies to the same address, for $5,00 a year, in advance. Orders from a distance must be accompanied by payment in advance or satisfactory reference. Postage the same as for a newspaper.